Name: _____ Course: ESLDO

Reliable vs Unreliable Sources

What is a source?

A source is a **place where a writer finds information** for their writing. A source can be a book, a website, an article, a video, and more. Sources can be used in your work to make your opinions and explanations stronger, but you should not rely heavily on sources.

There are TWO (2) different types of sources:

- **PRIMARY SOURCES:** This type of source is a document that was created during the time period of the topic that the writer is studying. It is an original source of information. For example, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins is a primary source because it is an original work by the author. Historical documents, such as letters and diary entries, are also Primary Sources.

- **SECONDARY SOURCES:** This type of source is a document that discusses or explains information found in a Primary Source. These types of sources usually analyze an original work and give an opinion on it. For example, an article discussing government control in the *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins would be a Secondary Source because it is ABOUT an original source.

Good (Reliable) Sources

A good source will be written by someone who is educated and/or has proven knowledge/experience with the topic they are writing about. Moreover, good sources are always reviewed by universities, governments, and other experts to ensure they are of good quality.

Bad (Unreliable) Sources

A bad source can be written by anyone, even if they don't have any education or knowledge on the topic they are writing about. This type of source is not reviewed by anyone to make sure they are of good quality.

Below is a list of sources that are BANNED, meaning that you are **NOT** allowed to use them for your work. **If they appear in your writing, you will be asked to remove information from that source from your work**. Besides this list, there are many more sources that are not appropriate for academic work. Please ask your teacher if you are not sure. You are also given a list of GOOD sources to help you start researching your topic, if you need to.

BANNED SOURCES LIST: Wiki, Wikia, Yahoo, Shmoop, Baidu, Naver, Google, Litcharts, Brainyquote, Enotes, Sparknotes, Gradesaver, Blogspot, Wordpress, and many more…

GOOD SOURCES LIST: Google Scholar, Toronto Public Library (for articles), websites that end in **.edu** or **.org** or **.gov**

How can I tell if a source is Good (Reliable) or Bad (Unreliable)?

Sometimes, it can be hard to tell whether a source is appropriate for your work. In order to choose good quality sources, try to ask yourself the questions below when doing research. **The guidelines below apply only to SECONDARY SOURCES.**

1. Who published the source? (university, government, etc.)

2. Is the author one or more people? Are they educated? Do they have verified knowledge/experience on the topic that they are writing about?

3. Is the source self-published or published by a company or publishing house?

4. Where does the information in the source come from? Is the information well-researched? Does the writer include a list of where they got their information from? Are the writer's sources of good quality?

5. When was the source published? Is it recent?

6. What is the writer's intention? Are they being objective?

7. Is the source organized? Is it easy to read? Are there spelling or grammar errors?